

VZCZCXRO8848
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK
DE RUEHKO #0356/01 0252252
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 252252Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0101
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE 0180
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE 0149
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0247
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0187
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 5602
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE 0188
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 1226
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0202
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE 0399
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE 0200
RUEHCU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE 0296
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 1677
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE 0119
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 1474
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE 0046
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE 0117
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 5257
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE 0253
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH IMMEDIATE 0460
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE 1995
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE 0059
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 1688
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 0640
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE 0004
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE 0210
RHMFISS/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 TOKYO 000356

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [KPAL](#) [XF](#) [IR](#) [IS](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS TOKYO

TOKYO 00000356 001.2 OF 005

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)
)

11. (C) SUMMARY: During Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's January 17-18 Tokyo visit, she signed an agreement to elevate policy talks from DG-level to VFM-level and reached agreements for Japanese business and cultural exchanges, according to MOFA and Israeli Embassy contacts. Japan agreed to Israel's request to downgrade its travel warning for Israel, but could not offer landing slots at Narita for flights from Tel Aviv. FM Livni stressed the need to bolster moderate states while maintaining pressure on extremist states and organizations, most notably Iran. The Japanese emphasized the need to maintain pressure on North Korea and, in the Middle East, to move forward with former Prime Minister Koizumi's Corridor of Peace and Prosperity initiative, which the Israelis have hesitatingly agreed to support. Prime Minister Abe also asked for Israel's support with regard to the DPRK abductee issue. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) MOFA First Middle East Division Deputy Director Hideaki Adachi and, separately, Israeli Embassy Second Secretary Israel Strolov provided Embassy Tokyo Political

SIPDIS

Officer with readouts of Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's January 17-19 Tokyo visit. Both said that the purpose of the visit was to follow up on former Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Israel last July, and that both

bilateral and regional issues were discussed. FM Livni met separately with Prime Minister Abe, Foreign Minister Aso, Advisor for National Security Affairs Yoriko Koike, Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry Akira Amari, and JICA President Sadako Ogawa.

MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ASO

13. (C) FM Livni's meeting with FM Aso was broken into two segments: a thirty minute bilateral meeting, followed by a dinner at which regional issues were discussed for 90 minutes. The meeting was preceded by a brief ceremony at which Livni and Aso signed a Memorandum on Policy Consultations which will elevate the existing annual Director General (Japanese) level consultations to the Vice Foreign Minister level. The first of these talks will take place within the next two months. Japan will be represented by VFM for Political Affairs Mitoji Yabunaka. His Israeli interlocutor will be Director General Aharon Abramovitch. The existing lower-level meetings will continue to take place.

14. (C) Adachi stated that FM Aso's agenda at the meeting was to promote three bilateral issues: political issues, focused on the Memorandum; economic issues, addressed in an agreement to send a Japanese private business delegation to Israel in the coming months; and cultural issues, embodied in an agreement to send Professor Masakyuki Yamauchi of Tokyo University as the head of a small academic mission to further study Israeli cultural issues and to establish contacts with Israeli academicians. Strolov revealed that Israel is a bit cautious about this last initiative and agreed to it only on the condition that Yamauchi - who's field of study is Muslim/Arab affairs - focus his efforts on developing

TOKYO 00000356 002.2 OF 005

contacts with Israeli counterparts, rather than holding multilateral meetings which might focus on regional or peace process issues. In addition, Adachi reported that FM Livni pressed the Japanese to consider enhancing research and development cooperation in the aviation and space sectors, and also expressed a desire to establish a direct Tel Aviv to Narita flight for El Al. According to Adachi, Japan has offered a slot for a Tel Aviv to Kansai flight, but the Israelis declined. He speculated that Japan might be in a position to offer a slot to El Al in 2009, if the capacity at Narita is expanded. Finally, Japan agreed to reword and downgrade its travel warning concerning Israel in a move that is designed to encourage additional Japanese tourism.

15. (C) With regard to regional issues, Livni's focus was on the Peace Process and Iran. She discussed Israel's concern about a growing divide between the moderate countries of the region and the more extremist elements, which include Iran, Syria, Hamas, and Hizbollah. According to Adachi, when Livni spoke of the moderate powers in the region, along with the obvious Arab powers and Israel, she also included Japan, and the United States. On Iran, Livni warned Aso of the danger presented by Tehran's desire to develop nuclear weapons and asked for Japan's continued support in putting pressure on Iran. She also thanked him, Strolov revealed, for the steps Japan has taken at Israel's request to demarche Iran on both the nuclear issue and on the subject of Tehran's recent Holocaust conference. Aso said that Japan is taking steps to enforce sanctions against Iran and that Japanese business and energy dealings with Tehran have decreased in the last month.

According to Adachi, Aso indirectly referred to Israel's nuclear weapons program by noting that Japan believes that regional security requires the region to be nuclear-free. Livni did not reply to this comment. (NOTE: FM Livni's hard line on Iran was the subject of a press conference held at the Foreign Correspondents Club on January 18, the full text of which, along with other Japanese press interviews, is available at www.mfa.gov.il. END NOTE.)

16. (C) On the Peace Process, Strolov reported that Israel is basically satisfied with Japan's stance toward the Palestinians, noting the close ties between Palestinian Authority leader Abu Mazen and Japan's Special Envoy for Middle East Peace Tatsuo Arima. In addition, Israel senses that in the past year Japan has shown a willingness to de-link regional and bilateral relations, as evidenced by their agreement to send bilateral trade and cultural delegations. Nevertheless, Livni felt the need to remind Japan about the dangers of working with any type of "national unity" Palestinian government that includes elements of Hamas. Strolov noted that Arima, whose exact position and role is somewhat of a mystery to the Israelis, impressed them by the fact that he sat directly next to Aso at the dinner and was clearly offering him advice and guidance.

17. (C) According to Adachi, the Japanese goal with regard to the Peace Process was to press ahead with former Prime Minister Koizumi's Corridor of Peace and Prosperity (CPP) initiative, which involves Japan, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinians. Aso explained to Livni that Japan believes it is in its national interest to promote peace and stability in the Middle East and views the CPP initiative as the centerpiece for Japanese assistance to the process. FM Livni

TOKYO 00000356 003.2 OF 005

agreed in principal to hold a meeting of the parties in the future although not, according to Strolov, without conditions. Israel believes the CPP is a positive approach, but needs to know exactly who from the Palestinian side would participate in any meetings. It would be unacceptable if Hamas representatives were involved in any way. In addition, Israel prefers that any such meeting be held at the "working" level, rather than at an "official" level, as proposed by the Japanese. In addition, Japan has yet to clearly specify the amount of financial resources it is willing to commit to this project. According to Strolov, the Israelis have encouraged the Japanese not to address this issue yet. Israel believes it is better not to discuss financing until everyone is clear on and agrees to the objectives of the CPP initiative.

18. (C) At the dinner Aso also told Livni that Japan is generally satisfied with China's recent stance regarding North Korea. He noted that China has always been the North's most important partner, but that the recent nuclear test had caused Beijing to look more realistically at the problem posed by Pyongyang. He mentioned that all countries in the region fear a collapse of the DPRK and said that Japan is particularly wary about the potential for civil unrest or other problems in late-February and early-March when food is scarce.

19. (C) The subject of Syria and Lebanon was only briefly touched upon, said both Adachi and Strolov, with FM Livni stressing the importance of implementing the provisions of UNSCR 1701. She did not press Aso for any specific assistance to Lebanon nor for Japan's participation at the Paris III conference.

MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER ABE

110. (C) FM Livni met January 18 with PM Abe, who was accompanied by National Security Advisor Koike, Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary Ando, and MOFA Director General for Middle Eastern Affairs Okuda. According to Adachi, the meeting was scheduled as a 15 minute courtesy call but ended up lasting 30 minutes. The two major topics discussed were Iran, which was raised by Livni who covered the same points she made with Aso and the press, and North Korea, which was raised by Abe. With regard to the DPRK, Abe explained that enforcement of UNSCR 1718 sanctions against the North is at the top of Japan's foreign policy agenda. He also said that the Japanese see a linkage between the situations in

Pyongyang and Tehran, and that the enforcement of sanctions against Iran is also important for Japan. "If we're pressing hard for sanctions on North Korea, we can't very well look the other way on Iran," he told Livni. In addition, he noted Japan is having a difficult time figuring out exactly what motivates the Iranians. The Israelis, according to Strolov, were surprised by how clearly Abe seemed to be linking Iran and the DPRK and by the fact that he raised this point himself.

¶11. (C) Abe also raised the abductee issue, emphasizing the importance Japan places on it and asking for Israel's support to resolve the issue. Livni replied that Israel is sympathetic, pointing out that its own citizens - soldiers -

TOKYO 00000356 004.2 OF 005

have been kidnapped by extremist elements who refuse to return them to their families. Left unresolved was exactly what type of assistance Israel would offer on this issue. Other issues touched upon briefly were Israel's concern about the possible shipment of arms for Hizbollah through Syria, and PM Abe's desire to move forward with the CPP initiative. In addition, Abe mentioned the rise of China, expressing particular concern over its non-transparent military build up. He told Livni that there is a need to understand better what's going on in China. Finally, PM Abe extended an invitation for Prime Minister Olmert to visit Japan, which Livni accepted with the caveat that conditions in Israel make it difficult to set a date at this point.

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

¶12. (C) JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (JICA) PRESIDENT SADAOKI OGAWA: FM Livni met with Ogawa to discuss JICA's involvement in the Middle East region and to explore possible avenues of cooperation. She wanted to understand better how JICA works as an implementing tool to advance Japanese policy and also how Israel can work with JICA in partnership with third countries in the region that would not ordinarily want to be seen dealing with Israel on a bilateral basis. Strolov gave as an example a trilateral project JICA, Israel and Egypt are involved with pertaining to agricultural development in Egypt, noting that it is easier for Israel to develop ties and do work with Muslim countries through third parties such as Japan. Even very small projects involving a single Israeli attending a seminar or participating in a trade show sponsored by JICA are of value to Israel, he explained.

¶13. (C) METI MINISTER AKIRA AMARI: Strolov said that this meeting was intended to follow up on plans to send a Japanese private business delegation to Israel. He claimed the Japanese "aren't being easy on us" concerning this visit and Livni wanted to meet Amari to raise the visibility of this initiative and to hopefully win him over. According to Strolov, nothing very significant resulted from what was basically a courtesy call.

¶14. (C) ADVISOR FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS YORIKO KOIKE: Neither Strolov nor Adachi were able to provide a readout of this meeting as it was a very small two on two luncheon. Strolov observed that despite the fact the Israelis are still trying to figure out exactly what role Koike plays, Livni wanted to meet her to develop a personal relationship given her closeness to PM Abe, her background with Middle East issues, and the fact that she has been given responsibility for the Iran portfolio at the Kantei. Historically, Koike has been very cautious about developing contacts with Israel, he noted.

COMMENT

¶15. (C) Both the Japanese and Israelis seemed generally pleased by Livni's short visit. It allowed them to brief the other on their respective foreign policy priorities and to

TOKYO 00000356 005.2 OF 005

take small steps to develop a closer relationship. PM Abe's overt linkage of Iran and DPRK sanctions seems to us to be consistent with Japan's non-proliferation policy.
SCHIEFFER